

## **President Bennett: “A first task ... get Southern Miss’ finances under control.”**

On Thursday, February 7, 2013, the IHL named Dr. Rodney Bennett president of USM. Bennett has been reported several times over the past few days as saying his first task at hand is to get USM’s finances under control. We have to assume he has said this in front of his IHL bosses. Finances need to be brought under control? When did the IHL or anyone else admit that USM’s finances were not under control?

At usmnews.net, we have reported many instances of incompetent uses of taxpayer and student resources. For example, how much sense did it make for then-president Martha Saunders to spend millions on an airplane when she was firing dozens of faculty members during the Great Recession. Where was the hue and cry of outrage over this and other waste of student and taxpayer money? Adding insult to injury, don’t forget what the airplane was used for. Junkets to ball games! Who was taking advantage of these very expensive junkets? IHL members like Doug Rouse. That’s like Mr. Ethics leading Ms. Spendthrift to do the right thing.

Doug Rouse is an IHL member who participated in naming Bennett as USM’s president. What non-contract, informal deal has Rouse made (or will make) with Bennett to continue selling the services of his medical business to USM? Do you really expect the financial shenanigans to end with so many of the same players still rolling the dice with USM and its students resources as if they were their private monopoly game?

So, IHL and President Bennett, be open and honest and tell us all the details that makes it necessary “to get USM’s finances under control”? Or will usmnews.net, through Mississippi Open Records requests and friends, continue to be the only detailed source of transparency at USM?